



ENGLAND  
GOLF



# **iGOLF**

## **GOLF CLUB TOOLKIT**



**iGolf**

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# INTRODUCTION

As part of our role to represent all golfers throughout England and supporting our aspiration to connect with as many golfers as possible, we are committed to the R&A and USGA's ambition to make golf more inclusive as part of the global roll out of the World Handicap System (WHS).

As the official single handicapping authority for all golfers in England, we, along with other golfing bodies worldwide, aim to provide as many golfers as possible with a WHS Handicap Index.

To do this we have collaborated in the development of iGolf, a connectivity platform for non-club golfers.

By providing these players with an official Handicap Index and a way to track their performance, we aim to encourage more play amongst this group, which in turn will provide clubs with a larger audience to market their membership offering to, as well as increasing the demand for green fees and competition entries, alongside auxiliary spends within the clubhouse and pro shop.

This document provides further information about the platform itself, as well as outlining in greater detail the numerous benefits for golf clubs that iGolf provides.





# WHAT IS iGOLF?

iGolf offers independent golfers an opportunity to become part of England Golf's digital community and obtain an official World Handicap System (WHS) Handicap Index and personal liability insurance for a £46 annual subscription fee.

## HANDICAP INDEX

Independent golfers can obtain and maintain an official WHS Handicap Index in the same way as golf club members and use the **'My England Golf'** (My EG) app to record and track scoring.

## GOVERNANCE

Appropriate procedures will be in place to ensure integrity of handicapping and adherence to Rules of Handicapping.

iGolf subscribers have different entitlements to affiliated members.

Previous club members are unable to join iGolf for a period of six months after their club membership term has expired.

The Terms & Conditions for joining can be found [here](#).

# MARKET OPPORTUNITY

iGolf is targeting regular golfers who have an avid affection for the game and, either by choice or circumstance, are not club members. They enjoy spending time and money on their chosen hobby/sport and may be golfers who already visit your club.

## CUSTOMER JOURNEY

**REGULAR  
GOLFER**  
(2.3 MILLION TOTAL)

**iGOLF  
SUBSCRIBER**

**INCREASED  
GOLF INTEREST  
AND ACTIVITY**

**NEW CLUB  
MEMBER**

**RETAINED  
MEMBER**

# AIM OF iGOLF

1

To encourage independent golfers to join a golf club through inspiring and educating on the value of club membership.

2

By providing a Handicap Index, we look to influence greater regularity of play and a desire to improve (consequently increasing golfer spend).

## BENEFITS

- New memberships
- Green fees
- Competition entry fees
- General visit spend: facilities, food & beverage, shop
- Build reputation: provide an excellent experience and reap the benefits through promotion
- Promotion of coaching (individual, group and family)





# ADDITIONAL BENEFITS



The development of the iGolf connectivity platform is an important step forward for the game and there are additional positive aspects which it will bring:

- To support The R&A and USGA's ambition to make golf more inclusive as part of the global roll out of the World Handicap System (WHS)
- To maintain the integrity of the handicap system
- To provide financial protection for as many golfers as possible through personal liability insurance
- To provide an opportunity to stay connected with golfers who leave membership due to lifestyle changes (*careers or family*)
- To develop a better understanding of the independent golfer community, their wants, needs and habits to help us further influence
- To create an additional funding channel to invest into the game and support golf

# HOW DOES A GOLFER OBTAIN AND MAINTAIN A HANDICAP INDEX?

01

Subscribers to iGolf can obtain a Handicap Index by posting scores from 54-holes of golf (9-hole or 18-hole rounds) played in accordance with the Rules of Golf and Rules of Handicapping on any rated course in England, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

Lapsed members who have scores in their handicap record from January 2018 may be allocated an initial Handicap Index based on these scores.

02

Subscribers scores will be entered via the My EG app and verified by a playing partner who is either a golf club member or fellow subscriber.

Once allocated a Handicap Index, iGolf subscribers can continue to enter general play scores via the My EG app in just the same way as club members do.

A newly-created handicap committee will oversee the iGolf program and input of scores and ensure the integrity of handicapping is maintained.

03

Additional checks and balances are in place to support the integrity of the handicap system which includes:

- Geo-location technology to ensure pre-registering the intent to post a score can only be done in close proximity to the course where the round will take place (scorecard submission can however be completed elsewhere)
- A time lag is in operation from the point where intent to play a round is registered to the stage when a score can be accepted

04

Subscribers to iGolf may transfer to club membership at any time in the year and their handicap record will move with them.



# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY CLUB?

Every golf club is unique, and every club is free to make choices of their own and decide how to engage with iGolf subscribers. Some clubs will already be proactively engaging with independent golfers and will not require additional support. Not all clubs will want or need iGolf to connect with independent golfers.



Whilst core membership is the heartbeat of any golf club, the success of engaging with iGolf might increase revenues in other areas including:

- Green fees
- Competition entry fees
- General visit spend: facilities, food & beverage, shop

In turn, the club may then be able to offer a greater value proposition to existing members in a further boost to retention.

iGolf is administered centrally by England Golf – there is no burden of administration on golf clubs.



# HOW CAN CLUBS CONNECT AND ENGAGE?

Our support is available to clubs looking to connect with independent golfers with a view to increasing member recruitment. We will directly communicate with subscribers on your behalf and signpost your opportunities.

## CLUBS TO DECIDE AND CONTROL OFFERS

A simple online form will be in place for clubs to notify England Golf of any offers or opportunities they have available for iGolf subscribers (competitive, membership or green fee).\*

## PROMOTION TO SUBSCRIBERS

Club offers and opportunities to be promoted on the iGolf website  
[www.englandigolf.co.uk](http://www.englandigolf.co.uk)

## ENGLAND GOLF WILL DIRECTLY COMMUNICATE WITH SUBSCRIBERS

E-comms to be sent to subscribers who have opted in, sharing information and signposting club offers and opportunities.

## SUBSCRIBERS TO CONNECT WITH CLUBS

Subscribers will be directed to club websites for further details.  
Clubs to capture data at point of sale and build relationships.

\*Clubs will be notified when the online form is live.



# POINTS TO CONSIDER

If your club is interested in connecting with iGolf subscribers then take time to consider the following points and structure your engagement plan accordingly.

## MAKE IT RIGHT FOR YOUR CLUB

- Can your club accommodate new, independent golfers on the course, in competitions and in memberships?
- Are you able to utilise quiet times on the course?
- Are you able to increase non-member spend (green fees, societies etc).
- Are you looking to attract regular golfers into membership?

## CONSIDER WHAT OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAVE AVAILABLE

- Promotion of existing offers
- A system in place to capture data
- Do you have follow-on opportunities you can promote?

## EXAMINE HOW BEST TO PROMOTE OFFERS ON WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Type of information you are sharing
- Call to action
- Point of contact for further information
- Process for signing up to any events
- Informing staff and volunteers



# OFFER IDEAS

Suggestion	Added Value	For Repeat Customers
01 Social play: green fee offers.	Loyalty offer. Buy X green fees, get one free	Decreasing green fee price per visit.
02 Experience offers – as part of a society or group offer, including coaching, food and use of wider facilities.	Include a competition/draw for a free round for one person.	Offer a range or clubhouse voucher to encourage a return visit.
03 Run a specific independent golfer competition. Opportunity to generate entry fee revenue and a chance to promote your facilities.	<p>Consider running shorter formats – may appeal to a proportion of the market who have competition for their time.</p> <p>Could include food, driving range balls, course planner or green fee discount voucher.</p> <p>Include involving members as playing partners or in volunteer roles to provide an insight into the club and provide a warm welcome.</p>	Promote further competitions, green fee and membership offers. Facility discounts.

# OFFER IDEAS

Suggestion	Added Value	For Repeat Customers
<b>04</b> Member/non-member events provide an opportunity to encourage independent golfers to experience the club and membership.	Members can champion the club and facilities.	Discounted member guest fee if the guest is an iGolf subscriber.
<b>05</b> Facility offers such as discounted use of the driving range at a certain time.	Loyalty voucher, coaching offers.	Offer a range or clubhouse voucher to encourage a return visit.
<b>06</b> Membership offers – utilise the 'Membership: 'Give it a Shot' campaign.  England Golf's national campaign that aims to spread a positive message about club membership.  A range of club resources can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	Tailored offer to include coaching, family and friends offer.  Intro or trial membership offer – to include social and playing opportunities with current members.	Highlight the wellbeing and competitive opportunities.

Price points are entirely at the discretion of individual clubs



# iGOLF FAQs

## How will we identify iGolf subscribers on the WHS platform?

Golf clubs will be able to view details of iGolf subscribers as they do any other golf club members. Details can be accessed via the WHS platform and your software provider. Golfers who are part of the programme will be listed under the home club 'iGolf'.

## Will an iGolf subscriber's score count towards the Playing Conditions Calculation(PCC)?

A daily Playing Conditions Calculation (similar to CSS) is calculated from all scores from all tees during that day. Scores must be returned as soon as possible and before midnight. The PCC is applied to the handicap calculations for all players, not just those playing from specific tees. The daily club report on the WHS platform is being developed to flag visitor scores and will identify the name of the home club of the player. For subscribers, this will be 'iGolf'.

## What do we need to consider within our Terms of Competition?

Entry into competitions remains at the discretion of individual golf clubs. iGolf subscribers will be notified within the Terms & Conditions upon joining that eligibility should always be checked with the competition organiser. If your club is happy to allow iGolf subscribers (who will have an official WHS index) to compete in any of your club competitions or events, you may wish to reference this in any terms of competition you are promoting.

Alternatively, if you want to restrict your competitors to members of your club or other affiliated clubs, please ensure this is clear in the respective terms of competition.



### How do we notify visitors which courses are set for handicap purposes?

Clubs can control which tees are used for the return of general play scores via My EG, this can be done by the club indicating which tees are set up for the return of scores in the WHS platform, under default markers.

### How will the system know if previous golf club members are eligible to join (outside of the six month period)?

Upon registration, individuals joining will be asked if they were previously a club member, and if yes, will be asked to provide their previous membership number to transfer any playing history across. Where possible, the system will also perform look ups on other information on the WHS platform to ensure an individual is no longer in club membership and their previous membership was outside of the six month period.

### How does the six month period work?

The six month period is from the date an individual's golf club membership came to an end and their membership term expired. It is essential that any golfers who have left a club have been resigned on the WHS platform at the end of their membership term. Without this we are unable to perform the necessary checks to determine whether they are eligible to register. If a golfer has not been resigned on the WHS platform or was resigned at a date later than their membership expired, the golfer will be asked to contact their previous club to provide evidence of the exact date their membership expired.

A golfer who falls within the six month period will be unable to register for iGolf, unless they are exempt due to golf club closure or disaffiliation.

### If an iGolf subscriber joins our golf club, what is the process for transferring their Handicap Index and playing history?

Joining an affiliated club supersedes an iGolf subscription. If your new member is currently a subscriber, you will need to search for them via their 'Membership Number' or 'Name' on the WHS platform. Once you have found them, click their record, then select 'Request a home club change', completing the remaining player information. England Golf will resign the subscriber so you have access to their playing record and Handicap Index.

**The WHS Golf Club Platform Guide provides additional information for anyone using the England Golf World Handicap System Platform. [Download guide document here](#)**



**WHATEVER YOUR GOLF CLUB CHOOSES TO DO, ALWAYS CONSIDER:**

- Data capture and future communications
- Showcasing your facilities and offers
- Utilising your members to champion your club

**FOR FURTHER SUPPORT:**

Contact our **Club Support Officer network** who are on hand to provide tailored, expert support in relation to recruitment and retention.

**Membership: Give it a shot** is England Golf's national campaign that aims to spread a positive message about club membership.





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[www.englandigolf.co.uk](http://www.englandigolf.co.uk)